

February 12, 2024
Regular Meeting

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Halstad was duly called and held at the Halstad Telephone Company community room in said city on February 12, 2024, at 5:15 p.m.

Mayor Darin Johnson called the regular meeting to order at 5:18 p.m.

The following council members were present: Mayor Darin Johnson, Brandon Mickelson, Gaylord Christianson and Peter Jacobson. Absent: Donna Scholl. Others in attendance: Wayne Tenneson, Marion Skare, Andrea Nelson, John Nelson, Rachel Arneson, Lucas Spaeth, Utilities Superintendent, and City Clerk/Treasurer Alli Tice.

Additions to Agenda – None. Motion to approve agenda by Gaylord Christianson, seconded by Peter Jacobson, unanimous vote, motion carried.

Approval of January 8, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes - Motion to approve minutes as presented by Brandon Mickelson, seconded by Gaylord Christianson, unanimous vote, motion carried.

Public Forum and Correspondence- The council received 3 public correspondence forms.

Rachel Arneson asked the council to review the Halstad Rescue Squad by-laws and approve a stipend increase starting January 2024. The council will discuss this under the new business agenda item.

Kristi Melting proposed an ordinance change to the City Council. She would like ordinance 62.15 (I) to be struck from ordinance 62.15. She also proposed that ordinance 62.18 (B) be amended to include private garages. The council asked Lucas Spaeth to review these ordinance changes which will be reviewed at the next meeting.

John and Andrea Nelson spoke to the council about returning the City of Halstad to in person voting. They have both completed election judge training and have helped with prior elections. It was discussed that the main reason for implementing mail only ballots was due to the lack of election judge volunteers. If Halstad were to return to in person voting, the council would have to decide 90 days prior to the primary election. There was more discussion about the benefits of both in person and mail only voting. The council will review the number of voting residents from the 2018 and 2022 elections and discuss this at the next meeting.

Consent Agenda

Peter Jacobson moved to approve the consent agenda, Brandon Mickelson seconded, unanimous vote, motion carried. The following items were on the consent agenda:

- A. Monthly claims for January 2024
- B. General checking bank reconciliation for January 2024
- C. Temporary Liquor Permit for 04/20/2024 – Landmark

Wimmer and Sunrise Report-Work is being completed on Wimmer #10 laundry facility. We received a \$3,000 CERTs grant, which we could receive more once all grantees have completed their projects. There are HVAC, electrical and plumbing upgrades that need to be completed. Wimmer #9 is being remodeled. There was a lot of water damage in the bathroom. Sunrise #13 and #16/17 are both empty and almost ready to be rented out again. Sunrise #8 is being cleaned out so that remodeling can start.

Utilities Report – MN Rural CEP contacted Lucas about the possibility of having a worker complete various jobs for the city properties, but the worker would be employed through CEP. There is work to be done at the Landmark. There was a request from the City of Borup for assistance with operating their water and wastewater. Lucas, Darin and Alli met with the EPA to work on the CREAT tool for climate resiliency and flooding concerns at the wastewater plant. Staff members are keeping an eye on the sewer and water lines at the LRC so they do not freeze up. Darin spoke about the utilities' membership with Northern Municipal Power Agency which owns 30% of the Coyote Coal Power Plant. Contracts were signed to purchase power through NMPA until 2055. NMPA is looking at refinancing their bonds to benefit from savings of \$1.5 million over the life of the bond. The City of Hawley has shown opposition to signing the refinancing certificates, but they would have contractual obligation as a member.

EDA Report- The EDA met on January 19th. The board discussed meeting quarterly or more as needed. Lucas and Alli met with Melissa Beach, Economic Development Administrator for Minnkota Power, about various needs for the city. Lucas informed the council about the MN DEED Lasso training for commercial property listings.

Unfinished Business:

Blighted and Dangerous Properties- There has been recent correspondence with BNSF/JLL.

Landmark- (Halstad School and Property) – The committee met on February 2. There have been two individuals that have expressed interest in the building. The FEMA Saferoom grant was submitted by Terri Trygg. They have requested more information for the grant. Summer Rec was discussed at the committee meeting. We are waiting to hear back from the previous director. Norman County Diversion program participants have been completing their community service hours at the Landmark. There is going to be a pickleball and volleyball tournament. The adult prom fundraiser was scheduled for April 20. The committee reviewed a rental agreement for the bouncy houses.

RFP for Redevelopment – The deadline was extended to June 30, 2024.

Sale of parcel #28-3382000 –No new update.

Valley United-Sale of Property – A survey needs to be completed before a property description can be written. The cost of the survey would be \$3,000. The council is not interested in spending that much for the survey to be completed.

New Business:

Rescue Squad Bylaws/Stipend- The last time the by-laws were reviewed by the council was in 2006. The Rescue Squad updated their by-laws at their December 2023 meeting. There was also a request for the stipend to be increased to \$15 per meeting, \$15 per hour for training, and \$20 per call lasting 2 hours with an additional \$20 per hour after 2 hours starting January 2024. Motion was made by Gaylord Christianson to increase the Rescue Squad stipend as presented, seconded by Peter Jacobson, unanimous vote, motion carried. The council will review the Rescue Squad by-laws for next month's meeting.

Resolution 2024-02-12-Authorizing and Supporting a Small Cities Development Program full application- Brandon Mickelson moved to approved Resolution 2024-02-12, Gaylord Christianson seconded, unanimous vote, motion carried.

Authorization of Halstad Citizen Participation Plan – Peter Jacobson moved to approve the Halstad Citizen Participation Plan as presented, seconded by Brandon Mickelson, unanimous vote, motion carried.

Set Date and Time for Public Hearings in regard to USDA Preliminary Engineering Report and Grant Application as well as Small Cities Development Program Grant Application-The city council set the public hearing date and time as March 11, 2024 at 6:15 PM at the Halstad Telephone Company community room.

Furuseth Encroachment Letter-The city received a letter and invoice from Juel and Bjorn Furuseth for land rent they believe the city is encroaching on. This land was purchased during the levee recertification project and the city believes that the property belongs to the city as staked by the watershed engineers. The city's attorney will be sending a letter to the Furuseth's stating the city's opinion that we own the land that is being referenced in their letter.

Community Information at Sunrise, Landmark and LRC-TV Purchase-Darin proposed purchasing TVs for the LRC, Landmark and Sunrise to broadcast community events and information. The information could be updated remotely for all locations. The council agreed this was a good idea to inform the community about current events. No motion was made as the dollar amount will be minimal for each location.

Other – Halstad Telephone Company will be installing a fence by the south shed for storage of fiber reels. We will be installing cameras to monitor the storage.

Upcoming events- Fire Department Mixed Stag – 02.24.2024, Brady Martz Audit – 03.04.2024-03.07.2024, Community Dinner – 03.25.2024, Landmark Fundraiser – 04.20.2024, 2024 Clean up – 06.11.2024 (only one clean up for 2024)

Gaylord Christianson moved and second by Peter Jacobson to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 pm, vote unanimous, motion carried.

The next Regular meeting of the City Council will be on Monday, March 11, 2024, at 5:15 pm.

Alli Tice / City Clerk-Treasurer